

Vlaanderen
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Nature management in one plan

ANB guides

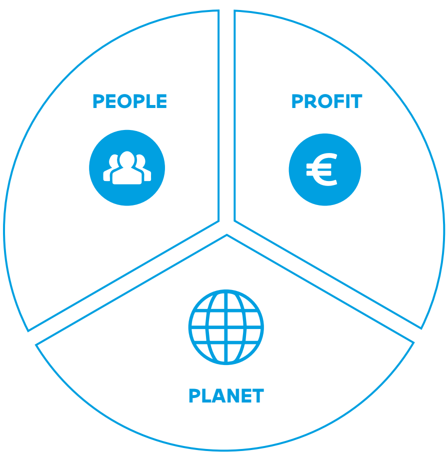
“the management plan as the foundation of a robust nature network”

As of today the region of Flanders will manage nature through one type of plan – **the nature management plan**. This plan will include all previous management plans:

- basic forest management plan
- extended forest management plan
- management plan for forest reserves
- management plan for nature reserves
- management plan for verges
- management plan for parks (in Flanders: Harmonisch Park- en Groenbeheerplan – HPG)

Advantages of one nature management plan?

- single approval procedure for all types of nature (forest, heath, open green space, ...)
- transparent and organised
- linked to subsidies
- nature management plan is valid for 24 years – evaluation every six years
- governments, organisations and private owners use the same system and get equal opportunities
- a nature management plan is a constructive tool for the long term planning of a plot of nature



THREE PILLARS IN EVERY NATURE MANAGEMENT PLAN

People, planet, profit – every nature management plan integrates these **three pillars**. Depending on the type of nature management plan (type 1 to 4) one pillar will be more prominent than the others.

PEOPLE = social function

To which degree does the nature conservator invest in accessibility for visitors?

- accessibility and nature experience
- recreational opportunities
- cultural-historical values, landscape values

PLANET = ecological function

Does the nature conservator intend to maintain or improve biodiversity?

- increase biodiversity
- achieve Natura 2000 goals
- protect current vegetation and species

PROFIT = economic function

Is the plot of nature suitable for production and profit?

- strive for a sustainable provision of goods and services
- manage the plot of nature with due diligence
- profit from wood production or hunting

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Five phases of a nature management plan

Private owners, nature organisations and (local) governments can draw up a nature management plan. The procedure is the same for everybody.

1 EXPLORATION

Based on existing information the nature conservator formulates a vision for the plot of nature. For example: Which nature objectives do you aim for? What about accessibility? Approval required from the Agency for Nature and Forests.

2 INVENTORY

The nature conservator maps out what is necessary to further develop and/or follow up the objectives.

3 MANAGEMENT GOALS

The vision from phase 1 is translated into specific management goals and takes into account the results of phase 2 *inventory* and further consultation.

4 MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

The nature conservator maps out what is necessary to further fine-tune the objectives.

5 MONITORING

During this phase it is decided how to monitor whether the nature objectives are actually achieved. Every six years the management plan will be evaluated by the Agency for Nature and Forests together with the nature conservator to check if achieving the objectives is still on track or whether nature management needs to be adjusted.

You can complete phase 1 *exploration* of the nature management plan preferably online through our support centre – https://eloket.natuurenbos.be/

The approval process covers two phases:

- Approval of outline based on phase 1 *exploration*
- Approval based on detailed content of management plan (phases 2 – 3 – 4 – 5)



TYPE OF NATURE MANAGEMENT PLAN DEPENDS ON AMBITIONS

There are **four** types of nature management plan. Which plot of nature falls under which type depends on the ambitions of the nature conservator. In any case each type needs to take into account the three pillars – people, planet, profit. Local governments can only draw up nature management plans type 2 and above.

Tip! Make sure to consult our info sheet *'Subsidies Nature Management Plan'* to learn which subsidies are linked to which type of nature management plan.

TYPE 1

- main objective: maintaining current nature values
- not entitled to subsidies except those related to accessibility

minimal

margin

TYPE 2

- main objective: achieving 25% Natura 2000 objectives
- meet criteria sustainable nature management
- partly exempt from inheritance tax and gift tax
- various subsidies: subsidies for accessibility for visitors, development of a nature management plan, nature management subsidies, ...

minimal

margin

TYPE 3

- main objective: achieving 90% Natura 2000 objectives
- meet criteria sustainable nature management
- partly exempt from inheritance tax and gift tax
- various subsidies: subsidies for accessibility for visitors, development of a nature management plan, nature management subsidies, ...

minimal

margin

TYPE 4

- main objective: status 'nature reserve'
- same as type 3 but with easement
- same subsidies as type 3 plus subsidies to purchase additional land
- complete exemption from advance tax payments, inheritance tax and gift tax

minimal

margin

THE LARGER THE AMBITION, THE HIGHER THE SUBSIDIES.

● PEOPLE – social function ● PLANET – ecological function ● PROFIT – economic function

Tip! Don't forget to consult our info sheet *'Everything about Natura 2000'* to familiarise yourself with the European nature objectives.

DID YOU KNOW?

1. Previously nature conservators had to prepare a forest management plan for every forest larger than 5 hectares. This is no longer required.
2. If a plot of nature is located in a special protection zone or in a Flemish Ecological Network area (Vlaams Ecologisch Netwerk – VEN), it must minimally meet all type 2 requirements.
3. If the land is sold, the nature management plan transfers to the new owner.
4. Preparing a nature management plan type 2, 3 or 4 easily takes 1 to 2 years. We advise to closely examine all seasons to get a complete picture of all vegetation.
5. For type 2, 3 or 4 the nature conservator receives financial support to prepare a nature management plan. This does not apply to type 1 (check our info sheet 'Subsidies nature management plan').
6. Planning on preparing the nature management plan yourself? That is certainly possible but don't forget that thorough knowledge of vegetation and nature management techniques is crucial. Why not ask a specialised company for advice?
7. The coming years the Agency for Nature and Forests will evaluate current management plans in view of transforming them into one nature management plan.

Questions?

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